

Deer Creek project is reducing pollution

3 Sep 1984

A four-year project to reduce water pollution in Deer Creek Reservoir, an important water supply for Utah and Salt Lake counties, is working, says Curtis Muir, chairman of the Wasatch Soil Conservation District.

Muir reported Monday that approximately 1,000 kilograms of phosphorous, the main pollutant found in animal waste, are being removed from the water in the reservoir each year.

The reduction is due to installation of manure bunkers and other animal waste control measures along Snake Creek in Wasatch County, which flows into Deer Creek Reservoir, he said.

"Dairy farmers along Snake Creek received funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Clean

Water Program to install the bunkers and other measures. Technical assistance was provided by the Soil Conservation Service."

Muir said the Mountainlands Association of Governments, with the assistance of the Utah Departments of Health and Agriculture, has monitored the water quality of Snake Creek since 1980. "Although results are preliminary, all monitoring points below the dairies show decreased levels of phosphorous."

The Wasatch Soil Conservation District has processed two additional applications for the construction of animal waste control systems and anticipates more as a result of the positive effects demonstrated in the Snake Creek area.

Monday, September 17, 1984

First triumph as a reporter was outdoing 'thunderbolt'

PROVO — Every time I go up the stairs to the Deseret News office on the second floor of the Knight Building in Provo, I am reminded of my first real triumph as a cub reporter some half a century ago.

I was so new, and so scared, and faced such a formidable opponent — but I stood my ground, and I've always been convinced it made a difference in my entire life as a newspaperman.

The other person was the late Fisher Harris, whom many Deseret News readers should remember. He was a powerful, influential, brilliant man. He was a big power in Salt Lake politics. He could be, and was when he thought it necessary, quite ruthless.

He was also, and this is what this is all about, attorney and legal spokesman for Utah Power & Light Co., pretty powerful in its own right.

The issue was who would build and control a power plant at the new Deer Creek Project — the Bureau of Reclamation or UP&L, which claimed certain water rights. To make this part of the story short, the fight went on for a couple of years, and then UP&L picked up its marbles and went home, saying, "We've decided we don't want it anyway."

But at this time the war was hot and heavy and a closed-door meeting had been held between the parties involved. I chased Harris up the aforementioned stairs asking him what had been decided in the meeting, because the public deserved to know.

AS IT LOOKS
TO LUKE

theron
h. luke

He turned on me with "it's none of the public's business."

It was the first time I had ever received such an answer as a newspaper reporter. I felt like I'd been hit with a thunderbolt.

Public officials in Utah then never, or seldom, said such a thing to the press. (And it was "the press" then, no television or "media.")

I don't know how I ever did it, but I recall saying calmly: "Thank you, Mr. Harris, I'll quote that in my story."

Half a century later I have a feeling that he was not in the least cowed — more astounded at this wet-behind-the-ears young reporter who had stood up to him.

I turned and went back down the stairs, expecting at any second a Fisher Harris thunderbolt would strike me dead. None did.

It was a block and a half to my office. I had just sat down at my typewriter, wondering how to handle this journalistic hand grenade, when he walked in the door. He must have come down one side of the street and me the other.

He pulled up a chair, sat down and said, not unkindly: "Now young fellow, let's talk this over."

Before we were through I had the whole story. I didn't even have to ask questions. He just gave it to me completely, objectively and slow enough so my trembling fingers got it all down. I scarcely had to rewrite it except for a lead.

Harris then stood up, offered his hand, actually thanked me and walked out of the room.

I remember to this day I felt numb when he left, with no particular sense of elation or victory. It was a good story, one of the best I ever wrote. Or maybe he wrote it — I've never been able to decide.

I do know one thing as I look back on it today. It was a turning point in my 50-year career as a journalist.

Board Meeting on Deer Creek Scheduled

Wave 8 Nov 1984

MIDWAY—The regular board meeting for the Division of Parks and Recreation will be held in the Wasatch Mountain Visitor's Center in Midway, and discussion will be held as to the proposed improvements at the Deer Creek State Park.

Park officials will be discussing the proposed improvement of the Deer Creek State Park, which in recent months has caused a large controversy as to the management.

The proposed project calls for the improvement of existing marinas, and the consolidation of the concessions on the lake.

"We've tried to be open about these things," said Kent Travis, Park Planner. "We've had four or five public meetings discussing the plan. To miss this one would be bad."

The board meeting is scheduled to take place at 9:30 a.m. at the Visitors Center. Everyone is invited to attend.

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Big Water Right Fight Intensifies

9-21-84

SALT LAKE CITY (UPI) — A truce between local water agencies has unraveled, seriously complicating plans for the Little Dell Dam east of Salt Lake City.

The problems cropped up when members of the Salt Lake County Water Conservancy District board voted unanimously Thursday to seek funds for two competing projects and asked the Bureau of Reclamation to take over management of Deer Creek Reservoir from the Provo Water Users Association.

The group voted without discussion to seek funding for two projects that will compete with the Little Dell project in Parley's Canyon east of Salt Lake City. The panel said the other proposals would make better use of funds.

The board also asked for new management of Deer Creek in Provo Canyon because members believe the Provo River Water Users Association has been "frustrating" a water exchange that could supply large quantities of water to the county.

Joseph Novak, attorney for the Provo group, denied his agency has interfered in any way with the water exchange.

Both actions by the Salt Lake agency appeared to end a complex agreement in which local water agencies agreed to cooperate to develop new sources of water along the populous Wasatch Front.

Robert Hilbert, general manager of the Salt Lake County Water Conservancy District, said his board's action will not kill the Little Dell Dam, but said it will "probably clutter" the process.